

## Summer 2015

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WE HONOR VETERANS



## Good Shepherd Community Care

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## Of Service

*A message from Tim Boon, President & CEO*

An ethos of service. Sometimes it feels old-fashioned; an obsolete ideal or nothing more than a quixotic notion in today's world. Over the past decade or so it has become common to hear laments of diminishing social capital in the US, of declining civic engagement and even of dwindling voter turnout.

Sometimes I succumb to the negativity and wonder if there is any future for mission-driven organizations and mission-driven lives in a culture that seems more and more inclined toward profiteering and self-absorption.

Then I open my eyes and realize I'm just getting a bit crotchety. My son tells me that happens with old people sometimes.

I am fortunate because when I open my eyes I see so many people at Good Shepherd who make themselves of service to their fellow beings and to their community. Seeing the commitment of our staff, volunteers and board members never fails to renew my optimism.

We have devoted a good portion of this newsletter, for example, in celebration of the life of our friend and volunteer, Bob Steck. Bob truly lived a life of service – from his younger years in the military, through his many years of teaching and finally in his last few years volunteering at Good Shepherd. Bob not only was a gift to the patients he visited, but was also an inspiration to me and to many others who worked with him.

I had lunch with Bob a few weeks before his death. He knew his time was limited and there were some things he still wanted to do. I recognized in that honest conversation that his noble motivations are the same ones as those nurtured by you – our supporters, our volunteers, our board members. It is both a profound and a simple motivation and was expressed simply by William Penn: "If there is any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not deter or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again."

This is the spirit from which our organization was founded 37 years ago.

Over time, so many things have become more complex – the regulatory and reimbursement environments, the competitive environment and the health care delivery system in general. What remains simple is that Good Shepherd is an organization dedicated to being of service – founded, driven and supported by people dedicated to being of service.

We are grateful to each of you who support our mission by either donating or volunteering. It is only because of you that we are able to be of service.



## An Ethos of Service

This year and for the past 4 years, Good Shepherd staff, board and volunteers have given their time to march in the annual Boston PRIDE Parade, an event that celebrates our community's diverse history, culture and identities and promotes community engagement and inclusivity.

At Good Shepherd, we strive to increase our capacity to compassionately care for all members of our community. It is our firm belief that everyone deserves an end-of-life experience that encompasses dignity and respect. This year we partnered with the LGBT Aging Project, a program of The Fenway Institute, to offer cultural competency training to our staff, board and volunteers. Our goal for participating in "Open Door" is to inspire systematic growth on both individual and organizational levels.

After reflecting on our organization's core values and exploring what diversity means at Good Shepherd, we are proud to present our Statement of Inclusion:

*Good Shepherd believes in the importance of mutual respect and acceptance and values diversity in our patients, families and caregivers, employees, volunteers, community, and partner organizations. We are committed to these values and honor the dignity of each individual through the care, support and education we provide.*

*As a Level Three "We Honor Veterans" partner, Good Shepherd has committed to honoring veterans at the end of life and has demonstrated the organizational capacity to ensure that veterans have access to veteran-centric, quality end-of-life care.*

### Another Opportunity to Serve

Our Veteran-to-Veteran Program pairs Veteran Volunteers with hospice patients who are also Veterans. This urgent mission is your opportunity to comfort and support your brothers and sisters in arms who are facing their final roll call. No one can provide understanding and solidarity like a fellow Veteran can.

Activities might include:

- reading out loud
- playing cards
- doing errands
- listening to music
- offering companionship & conversation
- sharing stories of service

Volunteers work closely with a highly-skilled & compassionate team of Good Shepherd caregivers.

For more information, contact Christina Coffey, Volunteer Coordinator  
ccoffey@gscommunitycare.org  
or call 617-969-6130

## In Loving Memory of Robert "Bob" Neille Steck

Everyday, we at Good Shepherd care for people, their families and loved ones during the final months, weeks, days and hours of their lives. This year, we lost one of our beloved Good Shepherd 'family' members. Robert "Bob" Neille Steck, 70, died Monday March 9, 2015, following a long struggle with cancer.

Amongst his friends and family, Bob was known for his incisive wit and political commentary, his passion for books and writing, his love of ideas, and his appreciation for robust debate (both invited and not). He battled four types of cancer over the decade preceding his death and had a great deal of time to contemplate his mortality. In his final weeks he said that he was approaching death with a sense of "great curiosity."

Truly, Bob's life was a life of service. He was drafted to battle late in the Vietnam War and later returned to Vietnam to serve as a peacemaker. A staunch advocate of hospice care, in the last few years of his life, Bob came to us at Good Shepherd in order to be of service to his fellow veterans at the end of their lives. Bob's presence to our dying veterans was not only a service to them, but an example for us. Bob spear-headed our Veteran Volunteer Program which allowed Good Shepherd to gain Level Three Accreditation with the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's We Honor Veterans program.

Bob was also eternally devoted to encouraging a community dialogue about end-of-life care, and consistently attended Good Shepherd's "Deep End" conversation groups. It was Bob's firm belief that human fulfillment lay in our struggle with our own mortality. We now struggle with his.

Bob's greatest joy was his wife, Sarah and his four daughters, Katherine, Ashley (Austin), Vanessa and Nicole.

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On Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, Good Shepherd held a ceremonial flag raising and dedication ceremony in loving memory of PFC Robert Steck. The event was attended by Bob's wife, daughter Vanessa and several of his other family members, along with Good Shepherd staff, Board Members and volunteers. Seth Bai of the Newton's Veterans Service Office relayed thanks from the Mayor's office and members of the Hanscom Air Force Base Patriot Honor Guard raised the flag.

A plaque was unveiled which reads:  
*In Loving Memory of Robert "Bob" Neille Steck  
1944 – 2015*

*A lover of ideas and activist with an unconditional commitment to helping others. Volunteer and founder of Good Shepherd's Veteran Volunteer Program. Bob was a rare soul who is deeply missed.*



*"Sitting with Bob made me want to be better at what I did, to go deeper, broader, bigger. Bob was not afraid to take another human being's hand and stare death in the face together. In many ways, Bob was the face of that mission [to provide end-of-life care to veterans] though his larger than life presence distracted us from his own illness."*

*Chelsea Shenker, Good Shepherd Social Worker*



*We are deeply grateful for the generosity of Patsy and Jim Kelley for donating a flagpole to Good Shepherd in memory of the deceased members of the Finnerty and Kelley families.*

*The Flag that we fly today was donated by Susan Zorb in memory of her brother, Corporal Fred Zorb.*

*“Why it’s important to talk about end of life: Because it’s a liberation; because it gives you peace to talk about it openly and not to be fearful, and to do it more the way you want it to be. You have the freedom to decide for yourself.”*

Lica Brill  
Family Member

## The Deep End

A group conversation about end-of-life decision-making for ourselves & our loved ones

Nearly 90% of seniors want to live at home for as long as possible, and most people say they would prefer to die at home. However, only about one-third of adults have an advance directive expressing their wishes for end-of-life care.

How prepared are you to have “the conversation”?

Bring your own questions - there’s a lot to talk about.

Tuesday, July 21st, 6pm  
Cary Memorial Library, Lexington

Tuesday, September 8th, 10:30am  
Morrill Memorial Library, Norwood

\*additional sessions TBA

A community service offered by Good Shepherd Institute  
RSVPs encouraged, drop-ins are welcome  
[khamberg@gscommunitycare.org](mailto:khamberg@gscommunitycare.org) or call 617-969-6130



*“Our work with these [Russian-speaking] patients and families can often be the difference between a chaotic and painful end-of-life experience and a comfortable and peaceful one.”*

Artur Micolisin,  
Russian Program Director

## круг заботы

In an effort to better understand some of the unique cultural and linguistic barriers that can prevent Russians and other émigrés from the former Soviet Union from understanding their medical conditions and options and from getting the most out of their final months, in 2014 Good Shepherd enlisted an Advisory Committee to the круг заботы program.

Recently in April, Committee members – old and new – convened to learn about some of the current issues related to outreach and care for Russian-speaking individuals towards the end of life and discussed ways to improve outreach and care for this population.

The Advisory Committee meets annually in the spring.



## Good Shepherd Institute

A community resource for education, training and research about end-of-life issues

Save the Date for this year's Good Shepherd Institute Dinner

### Featuring Scott Simon

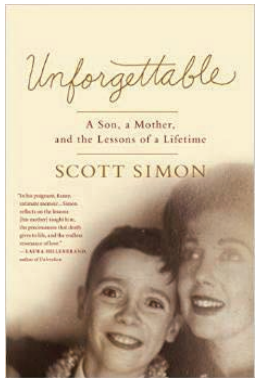
Host of NPR's WEEKEND EDITION, Award-Winning Journalist & Author

Thursday, November 5, 2015, 6:00 pm

The Westin Hotel, Waltham

Individual Ticket: \$50.00

Attendees will receive a free, signed copy of Scott Simon's newest book, *Unforgettable*, a memoir documenting his mother and his last week together.



This is a community education event, not a fundraising event.

Ticket sales do not cover the costs of the event.

Donations are appreciated to keep this event affordable for our community.

Make your tax deductible donation to Good Shepherd Institute today.

If you would like information on sponsorship opportunities, tickets or would like to make a donation towards the Good Shepherd Institute, please contact Jennifer Sax, jsax@gsccommunitycare.org, or call 617-969-6130.

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## Also this Fall

### Dr. Angelo Vlandes

Writer - Physician - Researcher - Advocate

Author of *The Conversation: A Revolutionary Plan for End-of-Life Care*

September 30, 2015, 6:30pm

The Newton Free Library

This program is a free community service offered by Good Shepherd Institute. Continuing Education Credits are available for nurses, social workers & marriage & family therapists.



From *Ground Zero* in New York, to ground zero in Kabul, refugee camps, snipers' roosts, and theater stages, National Public Radio's Scott Simon has reported from all 50 states and every continent. He has covered ten wars, hundreds of campaigns, sieges, natural disasters, civil wars, scandals, and opening nights.

His work has earned him every major award in broadcasting, including the Peabody and the Emmy. Most recently, Simon has been selected as the 2015 recipient of the Order of Lincoln from the Lincoln Academy of Illinois—the highest honor an Illinoisan can receive.

Simon brings a well-traveled perspective to his role as Host of NPR's Weekend Edition Saturday, which Jeff Yorke of *The Washington Post* has called, "the most literate, witty, moving, and just plain interesting news show on any dial."

*The Pedi Pal Program at Good Shepherd Community Care provides care for children age 18 and younger who have a life-limiting illness and helps parents navigate difficult decisions about care. The program focuses on the comprehensive management of the physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs of the child who is ill and his or her family while working together with the child's existing medical team.*

*Pedi Pal improves the quality of life of the entire family with a network of nurses, social workers, volunteers, spiritual care providers and massage, art and music therapists.*

*Like Christine, many of our Pedi Pal patients and families face challenges. Your support can help. Please contact us for more information about making a donation or supporting the needs of a family.*

meet with Christine's mother to find out what she and her brother needed and wanted. "I wanted the children to receive presents they desired and presents that would be useful," Alberta explains. Alberta learned that Marcus loved to play video games and needed a new winter coat. Christine, now 5 years old, was still sleeping in a crib and desperately wanted a big girl bed.

Alberta and her family got to work. With some help from Christine's Good Shepherd team, they were able to get a brand new twin bed and mattress donated, and Alberta's family purchased a complimentary dresser, dressing table and rug – all in Christine's favorite color – purple. Marcus received a PlayStation 3 and a fashionable North Face coat. With help from Alberta's family, Christine was able to create her dream bedroom, complete with a pink sheet set and princess accessories, and Marcus has been able to enjoy the normalcies of playing video games with his friends.

Ruth can't express her appreciation enough and is so grateful for the work of Good Shepherd volunteers. "They are doing this work because they want to," Ruth explains. "That compassion shines through in their actions."

*Written with help from Helen Ferranti, Simmons College Intern*

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## Good Shepherd Gives Thanks

Good Shepherd would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the following community partners who have provided support to our Pedi Pal Program. We are extremely grateful for their generosity.

Security Fences

J.P. Licks

Bob's Discount Furniture

New England Mobile Book Fair

The Collins Family

Lindsey D.

## The Mourner's Bill of Rights

Grief is a natural response that occurs when someone we love dies. There is no right or wrong way to grieve, nor a timetable for grieving. The goal of grieving is to help us acknowledge our pain, accept the reality of our situation, adjust to life without our loved one, and discover new ways of experiencing life to the fullest. Grief is an intense condition. It is not an easy journey. "As a bereaved person, you have certain rights that others must not take away from you. In fact, it is the very upholding of these rights that makes healing possible." *Alan Wolfelt, Ph.D.*

1. You have the right to experience your own unique grief.
2. You have the right to talk about your grief.
3. You have the right to feel a multitude of emotions.
4. You have the right to be tolerant of your physical and emotional limits.
5. You have the right to experience "griefbursts."
6. You have the right to make use of ritual.
7. You have the right to embrace your spirituality.
8. You have the right to search for meaning.
9. You have the right to treasure your memories.
10. You have the right to move toward your grief and heal.

*"When it seems that our sorrow is too great to be borne, let us think of the great family of the heavy-hearted into which our grief has given us entrance, and inevitably we will feel about us, their arms and their understanding."*

Helen Keller

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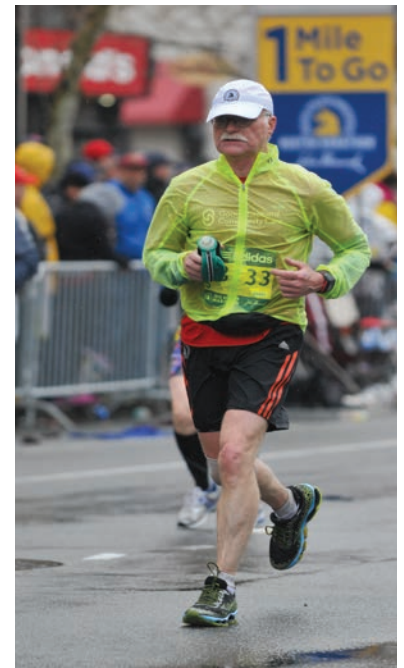
## Good Shepherd Runs in Boston Marathon

Good Shepherd Community Care is pleased to announce that – thanks to the city of Newton – for the third year in a row we were afforded a charity bib number to participate in the 2015 Boston Marathon.

Longtime Board Member Stephen Campbell ran from Hopkinton to Boylston Street to raise funds to help support Good Shepherd Pedi Pal.

On behalf of Stephen and all of us at Good Shepherd, thank you to all who supported our campaign - with donations, with enthusiasm, and by cheering for Stephen on April 20<sup>th</sup>. We raised more than \$7,000!

For more information on how you can make your tax deductible donation to Good Shepherd Community Care today, please call 617-969-6130 or visit [www.gscommunitycare.org](http://www.gscommunitycare.org).



## Return Service Requested



### Volunteers are People Who Give

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When Alberta Fitzgerald and her family decided to “adopt” Christine Pompilus and her family for Christmas, they never could have anticipated the effect it would have on both families.

Alberta has been a volunteer at Good Shepherd Community Care for about a year and a half. Christine Pompilus was two years old and very ill when she and her family were referred to Good Shepherd’s Pediatric Palliative Care Program three years ago. Born at 25 weeks, Christine suffered multiple medical complications including a restricted airway, which required a tracheotomy and 24/7 oxygen, as well as continuous feeds via gastrostomy tube. Needless to say, the Pompilus family has struggled. Christine’s mother, Ruth, is the primary caregiver for her daughter and for Christine’s older brother, Marcus. The financial hardships caused by Christine’s medical needs have created many challenges, so when Christmas began approaching, Ruth knew that gifts would just not be possible.

In late November, Alberta approached PEDI PAL Program Coordinator Christina Coffey to inquire about helping a family with Christmas. She and her family had decided they wanted to embrace the giving spirit and “pay it forward” this year.

Good Shepherd made arrangements for Alberta to... (continued on p. 6)